

TMBA 91

CHAPTER 91 BE CAREFUL

Before Megan could respond, Colleen said, "What aunt? We're not married yet."

Curtis walked over to stand at her side and smiled, "Do you think you can get rid of me? You're stuck with me, woman."

Colleen blushed and made a face at him. "I need to borrow Debbie for a minute. You guys go ahead." Then she took Debbie's hand and led her away to the door.

After they walked out of the ward, Colleen looked at Debbie and said worriedly, "About Carlos saving Megan, don't overthink."

"Okay," Debbie responded. but she found Colleen strange.

When they moved to the safe passage, Colleen stopped walking and reminded her, "Debbie, you don't have to get angry with Carlos because of Megan. That will save you unnecessary stress."

"Colleen, what are you trying to tell me? I don't understand."

Colleen laughed and said, "Right. I was so anxious I forgot that you had only seen Megan a few times."

Then she lowered her voice and said to Debbie, "I don't know what that girl is up to. You know what? Wesley's girlfriend, well, sort of girlfriend, got engaged to someone else, mostly because of her."

Debbie was shocked by the news. She knew Colleen was talking about Megan.

"Afterwards, Curtis and I argued a couple of times too. All because of her.

I don't mean to talk about her behind her back, but she's too manipulative. You never know what she is thinking. Anyway, be careful. Don't get into disagreements with Carlos over her. Otherwise, you will only give her what she wants. Okay?"

Finally, Debbie understood what she meant. "If she is so awful, why can't the four of them see it?" It struck her as odd that a whole four men still doted on Megan, even with full knowledge of her manipulation. Were they blind?

"They are men. Only women can see through other women's deep buried dark thoughts. In their eyes, Megan is an innocent, adorable girl. An angel. They never think badly of her. Nor do they believe that she will stir up things among us," said Colleen, shrugging with resignation.

If what she said was true, then Megan was really a horrible person. "I wonder what she is up to," Debbie said honestly.

"Who knows? Sometimes she acts as if she likes Wesley, but she also keeps a technical distance from him. Sometimes it looks that she is into Carlos, but she never takes much initiative. But Damon and Curtis are almost old enough to be her father. She is unlikely to set her mind on them."

Debbie felt tired. Tired of trying to figure out what was on Megan's mind.

"Now is not a convenient time to talk. I will invite you to tea some other time. Think about what I just told you. Don't say a word to those four. Or else, they will think that we are scheming against their innocent, adorable little Megan," Colleen cautioned. Her last remark was full of irony.

"Ah, it feels great to finally get these words out of my chest. I have been dying to talk to someone, but there was no one. And now I can talk to you. Debbie, women know women the best. Between you, me, and Megan, you are the most innocent, adorable soul. I'd fancy having you for a friend, just to enjoy your polite company over a cup of tea, or even on a shopping spree."

Debbie was surprised by Colleen's comments. 'I'm innocent? And adorable?' "Colleen, you can't be more wrong. Anybody can be innocent but me."

"Okay, let's go back. And one more thing, you're really special to Carlos. Cherish what you have," said a visibly amused Colleen, to Debbie's surprise. When she first met her, Colleen was such an elegant socialite diva; Debbie's memory flashed back to how the girl had dazzled at Megan's birthday party—a hot cougar on the dance floor, Colleen was quite a name. But today, she was so approachable and witty. 'This girl has a whole mix of different graces,' Debbie thought.

'What next surprise will I discover about her next time?' Debbie's mind ran on.

Gently, she shook her head and smiled.

When the two women went back to the ward hand in hand, Megan was lying in bed, surrounded by the four gorgeous men— every woman's dream.

Seeing the two women walk back in, Curtis and Carlos came to meet them. Carlos pulled Debbie away from Colleen to himself and asked, "Where were you?"

Debbie put on a smile and answered, "We went to the bathroom."

Curtis pretended to be surprised. "You two went to the bathroom together? Since when did you become so close?"

Colleen joked, "Debbie and I really hit off. We may wear the same pair of pants some day."

Whether what Colleen had said about Megan was true or not, Debbie felt comfortable around her, so she echoed, "Right. I'll try to lose weight from now on to fit Colleen's pants, if it comes to that."

Despite knowing they were just joking, Carlos still felt unhappy about what they had said. "My wife will never wear somebody else's pants."

Feigning a sulky look, he put his hand on Debbie's waist and pinched her. 'Lose weight? You should put on some weight, ' he thought to himself.

Amused at the serious face he was making, Colleen giggled and said to Debbie, "In Carlos you have a model husband. Someone worth keeping by any means."

"Really? I don't see it," said Debbie to Colleen, rolling her eyes at Carlos, whose hand was still sliding back and forth on her waist.

"I think you know it. You're just too embarrassed to admit it. The way you're blushing betrays you," Colleen retorted as she leaned into Curtis' arms, laughing.

Pretending to be angry, Debbie stared at Colleen and then said to Curtis, "Mr. Loftus, keep your woman in line."

"No problem," Curtis promised crisply.

Debbie gave Colleen a cocky smile.

At this point, Damon put in curtly, "Can you two couples get lost as soon as possible? Why can't you just keep your lovey-dovey down a notch in front of the single?"

"Why don't you just bring Adriana back and floss on us with the sweetness between you two?" Carlos retorted.

That line didn't go down well with Damon. If anything, it cut him deep at heart like a knife. Although he didn't say a word, his face darkened.

Seeing the brooding look on Damon's face, Debbie felt bad. She tugged at Carlos' sleeve. Carlos knew what she meant. He looked at her with a frown. 'Is she feeling bad for Damon?' he thought unhappily, a little jealous.

Assured that Megan was fine, Carlos and Curtis left the ward with their women.

After their cars drove out of the hospital, they went in different directions.

In the next two days, Carlos didn't go to the company. He worked at home. Debbie had offered to take care of him at home, but he sent her to school. As he had demanded, Debbie didn't skip a single class.

On the third day, Debbie and Kasie waited on the playground for Jared and Dixon to come to the

classroom with them. A few minutes passed, but the boys didn't show up. To kill time, the girls chatted as they were waiting.

Then all of a sudden, Debbie spotted two familiar figures in front of the office building. 'Is that Carlos? Isn't he supposed to be resting at home? Is he fit enough to teach already?' she wondered.

"Debbie, what are you looking at?" someone asked in a soft voice.

#### CHAPTER 92 CARLOS, I LIKE YOU

Debbie rolled her eyes upon hearing that voice. Gail was everywhere on campus, always following her like an annoying shadow. "What's it to you?"

Debbie retorted. She was wondering why Carlos hadn't told her he was coming here.

But then, a lightbulb came on in her head. She glanced at Gail, who was so excited to see Carlos that she was close to tears. 'No wonder Debbie keeps looking over there. It's Carlos! I'm not dreaming! He's here! I'm seeing Carlos again!' Gail thought, her eyes reddening.

The two men, Carlos and Curtis, were so handsome they made a magnificent sight when they stood together. More and more eyes were drawn to them.

Debbie patted Gail's shoulder. The girl was bathed in happiness now that she saw her dream man. "What?" she asked, so excited that the grin on her face didn't vanish even when she turned to face Debbie.

Standing next to Gail didn't make Debbie explode with rage this time, which was odd. She pointed at Carlos and said calmly, "Look. Carlos."

Gail rolled her eyes and snorted, "I'm not blind."

Ignoring her hostility, Debbie raised her voice and suggested, "Care to make a bet?"

"Why would I do that?" Gail intended to say "Have you lost your mind?" But she remembered she had a public image to maintain, and bit back that retort.

"Don't you always want me to make a fool of myself? I'm giving you a chance. Remember the last time you set me up and I ended up embarrassing myself at Carlos' launch event? Now that he's here, are you really going to miss such an opportunity to humiliate me again?" Debbie coaxed her.

Gail moved closer to Debbie with an innocent, sweet smile on her face. But what she said was neither innocent nor sweet. "Of course not. I won't miss any opportunity to screw things up for you. It's so much fun," she whispered in Debbie's ear.

Debbie took a step back to put some distance between them. Gail was not alone. A few of her friends

were with her. Debbie looked at them and said, "How about this? I'll go confess to Carlos again. If he doesn't turn me down then you'll have to apologize to me loudly ten times and sing "Bad Romance" in a public place. Your friends too. "

Gail's friends were surprised by the idea. At first, Kasie was confused about what Debbie was trying to do. But now she found the idea hilarious. To help Debbie out, she held her arm and said anxiously, "Debbie, are you crazy? Have you forgotten how he treated you last time? Don't do anything stupid!"

"Relax, Kasie. It'll go better than last time, believe me. Everyone will be watching, after all." Debbie raised her voice as she said the last sentence.

'Right, a bunch of students will be there, ' Gail thought. Everybody in Alorith knew how ruthless Carlos was. If she recalled right, Debbie had even been tossed into the ocean to drown. She loved imagining how humiliating it would be for Debbie if Carlos rejected her right to her face and threw her out of university.

However, Gail didn't fall for Debbie's trick easily. She sensed that something was off. "But we aren't that close to Carlos. How do we know what went on between you?"

"Easy. I'll face you. To make sure I won't cheat, you can see what I'm saying. How does that sound?" Debbie had been seeking revenge and now the chance had presented itself.

Nonetheless, Gail turned her down. Her friends, on the other hand, urged her to agree. "Gail, that's Carlos. If Debbie does this, she has a death wish. What could go wrong? Don't you want to see what he does? If he kills her, we get a show," a girl said.

Debbie gasped. 'What a cold bitch! She even wants to see me die.'

"But..." Gail faltered. She recalled last time they were at the mall. She and Debbie fought over the collar pin. Judging from what happened that day, Debbie and Carlos seemed to have a special connection.

Sensing Gail's uncertainty, Debbie decided play up her gift for acting. She whispered in Kasie's ear, "I hope he forgot what he said last time. He promised to bury me alive if I ever got him mad."

It was a stage whisper, pitched perfectly so that Gail could hear it, and her friends couldn't.

Kasie acted shocked and pulled her aside. "You out of your mind, Tomboy? If he really said this, maybe he meant it. I don't want to watch you die."

As they were whispering to each other, Gail broke in, "What are you waiting for? He might leave any minute."

Debbie instantly stopped talking and pretended to be surprised. "What? You agreed to it? I was just stringing you along. No way would I do that."

Seeing how frightened Debbie was, Gail's friends gloated. "You can't back out now, Debbie." "Right. What's the matter? You chicken?"

They kept taunting her and egging her on.

Debbie took a deep breath and walked towards Carlos with a dozen girls watching.

Curtis and Carlos were talking about the incident involving Megan. Curtis told Carlos, "Wesley has taken care of everything. Just take some time to recover and come back when you're ready. I always wondered why you agreed to teach here even though you're uber busy. Now I get it. There's someone you like here."

Carlos smiled. "I have to come. My wife is such a pain. But you—" Carlos had intended to ask, "You seem to care about Debbie a lot. Why?"

A sweet voice interrupted him. "Hi, Carlos, Mr. Loftus."

The familiar voice made Carlos' smile widen.

Curtis waved at the girl. "Debbie, come here." As an educator, Curtis was urbane in his every movement.

Debbie trotted over to them and stood where she could see Gail.

Carlos checked the time and asked, "Two minutes to class. Shouldn't you be on your way?"

Debbie didn't answer his question. She could sense annoyance in his tone, but she ignored it. Instead, she looked at Curtis with embarrassment and asked, "Mr. Loftus, could you please give us a minute?"

"You want to talk to your husband in private?" Curtis asked.

Debbie nodded with a giggle. "Kinda. But I only need him for a minute. Or maybe you could just turn around."

Curtis looked at her lovingly and said with resignation, "Your minute starts now." Then, he turned his back to the couple.

Looking at her expressionless husband, Debbie smiled mischievously, which confused her man. The next second, she snuggled into his arms and shouted, "Carlos, I like you. I really like you!"

She had shouted so loudly Gail didn't have to read her lips to know what she was saying, for her voice could be heard from tens of meters away.

The other girls watched her, their mouths agape. Even Jared and Dixon, who had arrived at the scene late, were astounded. 'When did she get so brave?'

#### CHAPTER 93 I'VE HEARD WHAT YOU SAID

Carlos had been a little unhappy about Debbie being late for class. But her confession of feelings filled his heart with joy.

However, when he looked at her, he noticed that she was staring at something. He turned back and noticed a group of students were watching them. Immediately, he realized that the confession was just part of some game his wife was playing.

But he didn't seem to mind. He pulled her back into his arms and said, "I've heard what you said. Now go to your class."

Seeing what was happening, Gail was so shocked she couldn't feel her legs anymore. She collapsed onto one of her friends and wondered, 'What on earth is Debbie's relationship with Carlos?'

Not only didn't he push her away, but he actually hugged her! There must be something going on between them.'

Having achieved her goal, Debbie wriggled out of Carlos' arms and apologized to Curtis, who was looking at them in disbelief. "I'm sorry that you had to hear my confession of feelings again, Mr. Loftus. I'm going to my class now. Bye."

She had hardly turned around before Carlos took her by the wrist and said, "I'll pick you up after class this afternoon."

With her mind totally on Gail, she replied casually, "Um...

Okay."

Carlos watched as Debbie left. He was sure that his wife had just used him as a pawn.

But he still looked happy. Curtis laughed, "I should have listened to her and left."

Carlos responded flatly, "I'm going back to my company. My classes will be resumed next week as scheduled."

His wife was still a little imp. He had to put more effort into her.

Curtis patted his shoulder. "I'm looking forward to the day when you will address me differently."

Carlos raised his eyebrows in confusion. "Perhaps, I should do a background check on you and my wife."

Sensing his jealousy, Curtis waved his hand and said, "There's no need for that. You will know it sooner or later. You just need to believe that I won't harm her."

When the bell rang, Carlos got into the vehicle and Ashley started the engine.

The Rolls-Royce Phantom slowed to a stop when it reached Debbie. Then the black tinted window was rolled down and revealed Carlos' handsome face. All the girls that were around held their breaths in anticipation. However, Carlos only had eyes for one.

He reproached, "Think about what you could do to get me to forgive you for being several minutes late for class."

Everyone that was around was stunned to hear what he said.

The way he spoke to Debbie was totally different.

"How about I treat you to dinner?" Debbie quickly blurted out.

"I don't accept bribery." He turned her down flatly.

The window was wound up again and

the Rolls-Royce sped away.

Once the vehicle had left, Debbie's classmates surrounded her and bombarded her with questions about what her relationship with Carlos was. "When did you meet Carlos?" someone asked. "Why didn't he reject you?" wondered another student.

While she was texting Carlos, Debbie answered them casually, "Oh, about that. Well, once Gail apologizes to me and you guys sing 'Bad Romance', I'll explain it all to you."

She pressed "Send" and the message read, "Mr. Handsome, I'm sprinting to the classroom now. Can you forgive me?"

He simply replied, "Do I need to show you the surveillance footage of your school?"

Debbie pulled a face towards the phone, meant for Carlos. He indeed knew her well.

Some girls crowded around Gail, asking her to apologize to Debbie. Gail assumed a sad face and wrung out some tears, hoping to get off lightly.

But the girls weren't buying it. They wanted her to do it as soon as possible, so they could hear all about Carlos and Debbie's relationship.

Gail had no other choice but to do what Debbie had asked of her. So she took a deep breath and put her head back, shouting ten times, "Debbie, I'm sorry—"

Hearing that, Debbie had a big smile on her face, as pleased as punch. Embarrassing the person that she hated really made her day, especially since Gail was always picking on her.

The girls were supposed to then stand under the national flag and sing the song, "Bad Romance." Since classes had already begun, there were only a few students passing by that would hear them. Gail wanted to chicken out. But the girls couldn't stand the suspense any longer. They were eager to find out the juicy information about Carlos and Debbie. So they grabbed Gail and dragged her under the national flag and sang the song.

The scene went viral on the school forum.

However, when the girls asked Debbie about her relationship with Carlos, she simply said, "Why don't you ask him?"

After that, she turned on her heels and walked away.

The girls were left speechless and furious.

Soon, rumors about Debbie and Carlos traveled around the campus. The most popular version was that Debbie hooked up with Carlos and was his mistress. And another was how she confessed her love for Carlos on campus but was turned down.

Debbie and her friends had hardly sat down in the last row of the classroom when Carlos sent her a message. "Did you have fun?"

Debbie was puzzled. She texted back. "What do you mean?"

"What were you doing just now?" replied Carlos. Debbie realized that he already knew about what had happened between her and Gail. She looked around half expecting to see him there. 'How did he do that? Does he have six pairs of eyes?' she wondered.

After what had happened that day, no one on campus dared to mess with Debbie again, so she finally enjoyed some peace.

However, on the flip side of the matter, she had to deal with a girl who was standing in front of her and expressing her feelings for Carlos. "Debbie, I really am crazy about Carlos. I have liked him for more than ten years. Can you give me his WeChat or Facebook account?"

Debbie sat up frowning and replied, "I don't have it. You can ask him yourself in his class the next time you see him." She was telling the truth. All she had was his phone number.

To her surprise, the shy girl suddenly made a hideous face and said sarcastically, "I thought you were close to Carlos! It turns out you don't even have his contact information. How dare you pretend to be his woman!"

"Damn it!" Debbie couldn't help cursing under her breath. Then she slapped the table and demanded, "What the heck do you mean by pretending to be his woman? Don't you dare to leave before you explain yourself!"

Her classmates fled the classroom one after another when they saw her flare up.

Was this the same graceful girl who had danced at the Solar New Year's Gala? They all wondered.

The other girl was terrified. Even without Carlos, Debbie was scary enough. The girl swallowed and stammered, "It is said that you are Carlos' woman. Didn't you start the rumor? People also say that you hugged Carlos. Is it true?" The girl stared at Debbie curiously.

"No, it's not," Debbie replied firmly.

Then Jared took out his cell phone and showed her the picture on his phone, at which Debbie suddenly became speechless. Someone had photographed the scene where she had hugged Carlos and expressed her feelings for him and uploaded it on the forum. It had racked up countless views and likes.

#### CHAPTER 94 LET'S GO HOME

Now that Debbie had had her revenge on Gail, nothing else mattered. As for the man in the picture online, she declared, "That's not Carlos. That's my boyfriend." She believed that making her relationship with Carlos public would only bring herself more trouble.

Hearing her words, her friends thought to themselves, 'Come on! That is Carlos.'

The girl who had come to ask for Carlos' contact information left the classroom with doubts of her own.

Debbie took out her phone and complained to Carlos, "Carlos, your fans are totally crazy. If they want your contact information, why didn't they just ask you in person while you had classes at school? Now that they know I know you, they keep coming to me for all kinds of information. Not even half a day has passed and crazy fan number 33 found me in the classroom. This is madness!"

She didn't get any reply for a while. Half an hour later, her phone buzzed. "You should get used to it because I might make your identity as Mrs. Hilton public anytime."

If he did that, more girls would try to find her. And this time, they would be pissed off that Carlos was off the market! She shivered at the thought of their reaction to the news. "Carlos, please have some mercy on me. Let's keep this low-key. Just like how it was three years ago," she pleaded.

Carlos smiled at the other end of the phone. "Deb, it's too late for that now," he replied.

'The moment I lost my heart to you, I knew that you were the one. You are mine and you are not going anywhere. I want you by my side for the rest of our lives and I can't wait to tell the whole world that you are my wife, ' he thought to himself.

Debbie, on the other hand, was terrified by what would happen once everybody knew she was Carlos' wife. She totally freaked out when another one of Carlos' fans ran excitedly towards her.

'Argghh! I can't stand this anymore. It's driving me crazy! Whoever wants to be Mrs. Hilton, please be my guest. I'm more than willing to give the title away.'

But then she pictured another woman dining with Carlos, traveling along with him, having fun with him, sleeping in his arms... Just imagining those scenes was enough to upset her immensely!

That crushing feeling completely cleared her head. She knew what she wanted now. She shoved Carlos' enthusiastic fan aside and whispered to Jared, "I need money. Get me a job in some other bar. I need to sing."

Jared stared at her for a moment and then shook his head. "You know what? You're insane!

Your husband is generously rich. If this were some other woman, she would be busy enjoying her comfortable life. But you? You want to work part-time! What are you thinking?"

Debbie was frustrated. "There's something that I want to buy. It will be more meaningful if I buy it with my own money," she explained.

She only had around \$20, 000 left from the money she had made by drinking. It was enough to buy the thing that she wanted, but she could only afford the lesser version for that money, which wouldn't do. She only wanted the best for Carlos.

She liked Carlos. There was no more doubting that truth. There was no hesitation in her. Since that was crystal clear in her heart now, she decided to show him how she felt about him before it was too late.

She couldn't stand the thought of losing him.

"Okay, I'll find another job for you. But no drinking. Can you promise me that?" The risk was too high for Jared. Carlos would probably skin him alive if he found out that Debbie got drunk again.

"Yes! Cross my heart!" Debbie promised, patting her chest.

Carlos picked her up after school. They went to a hotel for dinner. That evening, she was unusually sweet to him. During dinner, she asked him about his day and showed concern about the recovery of his wound. She picked up his food for him, and she even massaged Carlos' back diligently even though he told her there was no need for it.

When they both finally sat down to eat, Carlos put some boneless fish on her plate and said, "There's no use sucking up to me. I still remember that you were late for class today."

She squirmed in her seat. That really brought her spirits down.

Head bowed, Debbie poked the fish with her chopsticks with a frown on her face. Then she said with a sigh, "No horror movies and no martyrs' cemetery, okay?"

"Okay," Carlos agreed readily.

His response came as a pleasant surprise to Debbie. She was thrilled. But before she could swallow the next bite of her delicious fish, he said, "I'm taking you to watch a live show—a person making out with a snake."

"N-N-N-No!" she objected desperately, her eyes wide open and filled with horror. She had seen that horrendous scene before. There was no way in hell that Carlos would let her go with just making her watch the show. Her legs started trembling as memories of the previous incident emerged in her head.

Once, she had gone to Thailand on a holiday with her friends. "Human and snake kissing" was one of the shows on the itinerary. Disgusted and terrified by the show, she had hidden behind a column and played with her phone during the duration of the entire show. When she raised her head towards the end of the show, she saw Jared making out with the snake. She was so frightened that her phone was tossed away when she jumped out of her seat. After they had returned from the trip, she avoided Jared for half a month.

At this point, Debbie already knew that Carlos made sure that every one of his punishments was harsh and effective to the people who angered him.

Even Debbie, his own wife, wouldn't be spared. He was a cold man.

All of a sudden, the tender, flavorful fish tasted incredibly bland. "Is there any way that you would let this one go?"

Carlos gave her a glance as he picked out the fish bones for her. "That depends on your performance."

After she heard his words, an idea dawned on her. She stood up from her chair abruptly and locked her arms around his neck. She then looked him in the eye and

slammed her lips on his. Three times!

That would definitely help her get through, she thought. However, the man's face darkened and frowned. "Debbie, did you wipe your mouth after eating?"

"Debbie bit her lips and looked elsewhere. That hadn't occurred to her.

An innocent mistake. But it was not too late for her. She could still make up for it. She quickly drew a tissue and was about to wipe her mouth when it hit her that it might be wiser to wipe the tyrant's mouth first.

So, she gently wiped her husband's mouth with a grin and then her own.

After throwing the tissue into the bin, she wrapped his neck from behind and asked, "Mr. Handsome, do I get an A for my performance?"

"I didn't feel much sincerity. Perfunctory kisses don't satisfy me."

Frustrated, Debbie buried her face in his neck, and rubbed it back and forth; her breath drifted lightly against his skin. Carlos' hand stopped in midair. 'This woman is doing it intentionally,' he thought.

He slowly put down the chopsticks and wiped his mouth and hands clean with a wet napkin.

The next second, Debbie was pulled into his arms and seated on his lap. She looked at the door nervously, her face red. But they were in a private booth, so no one would come and interrupt them.

Carlos took her hand in his and then pulled her in for a deep kiss on the lips. His tongue was restless in her mouth; his breathing became heavier and heavier.

He whispered to her in a husky voice, "Let's go home, shall we?"

"Yes," came her swift answer. She was aware of what he meant.

Compared with making out with a snake, kissing Carlos sounded like a much better choice. So she had agreed to it without thinking when he had suggested that they go home.

Carlos didn't even wait for her to finish her dinner before dragging her out of the hotel and heading home.

What would happen after they got home was way too exciting for Debbie. Too embarrassed to look at Carlos, she kept her head down and pretended to play with her phone, flushing as she thought about the impending scene.

When they were about to arrive at the villa, Carlos' phone rang suddenly. Debbie raised her head and saw the caller ID on the LED screen of the vehicle backup camera—Megan.

Carlos answered the call immediately, "Hi, Megan."

Megan sounded scared and anxious as she blurted out, "Uncle Carlos, there are some men at the gate of

my housing community. They seem to be looking for something or someone. I've been waiting for them to leave for half an hour, but they are still here. What should I do?"

Carlos' face turned dark in worry and fury. He steered the wheel while saying, "Go to the security guards' room and wait for me. I'm on my way."

"Okay, but hurry," Megan urged.

"Okay."

By the time the call ended, the excitement and sweetness in Debbie's heart had died away.

"It must be those men from last time. We're going to Megan's place to pick her up," Carlos said in a hurry.

#### CHAPTER 95 WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO BUY

"Wait. Just drop me here at the roadside," Debbie said. She didn't want to see Megan, nor did she intend to stop Carlos going.

Carlos looked at her and sensed the change of her mood, but he didn't know what she was unhappy about. "Honey, if those men take Megan, she will be in danger," he explained patiently.

But Debbie didn't respond.

When they arrived at the gate of Megan's housing community, the girl was cringing in a chair in the security guards' room, holding her legs.

"Megan!" Carlos called.

At his voice, Megan raised her head, ran towards him, and held him tightly. "Uncle Carlos, I'm so glad you're here. I was scared out of my wits."

"Don't be afraid. I'm here,"

Carlos comforted her gently. Seeing her husband holding another woman was bad enough, but his soft, warm consoling tone made Debbie feel even worse.

Some people used to say that her husband had a ruthless, cold soul.

But not to everybody, it seemed.

Gently he picked Megan up and carried her towards the car. "Open the door," he ordered the security guards.

"Yes, Carlos," answered the guards in unison as one of them darted to open the back door quickly.

Then he turned to Debbie who had quietly stood by, watching. Thank God, he hadn't forgotten about her yet. "Deb, get in, please."

Debbie didn't want to get in the car.

Thankfully, as she was wondering what to do, her phone rang.

"Hi Tomboy, I'm calling just to ask where you bought the red wine last time," said Kasie.

"What? You're drunk? Where're you? Okay, I'm coming to pick you up," Debbie said on the phone.

Kasie was confused. She took her phone away from her ear and checked the service, which was good. "No, Tomboy, I am asking—"

"Oh, you are at home. Okay, stay put and wait for me. I'm on my way."

Before Kasie could respond, Debbie hung up. She looked at Carlos who was waiting for her to get in the car and said apologetically, "Sorry, Kasie is drunk at home. She is in a really bad mood right now. I have to go check on her. I'll stay at her place tonight."

Staring at her, Carlos didn't say anything back.

Megan, who was in his arms, clutched his shirt and said, "Debbie, go ahead if you have something to attend to. I'm already feeling much better and I don't see the need to hold you around. I'll watch over Uncle Carlos for you, just in case you're worried about him."

Debbie was startled at the girl's nerve. 'This manipulative bitch!'

"OK. Bye," she said and left in a huff.

When she turned around, she hoped he'd call her or stop her. 'Stop me. If you stop me, I'll get in the car and go back to the villa with you.' But till a cab stopped in front of her, he didn't call her or come to her to ask her to stay.

Carlos put Megan in the back seat and said, "Have a rest. I'll go—" He intended to tell Debbie that he wanted to drive her to Kasie's himself.

However, before he could even finish his sentence, Megan grabbed his sleeve and said in a feeble voice, "Uncle Carlos, I feel... I'm not feeling well... I...

think I need to take the medicine."

"Alright. Do you have any of the drugs with you?" asked Carlos. "Y-Yes," Megan answered, pointing at her bag with great difficulty.

After Carlos had given her the medicine, he turned to look for Debbie, but she was long gone.

Carlos was so upset he felt like cursing.

Debbie called Kasie in the cab and asked, "What did you call me for just now?"

Kasie didn't answer. She asked instead, "What's going on with you?"

Listlessly, Debbie replied, "Not much. Where are you? What are you doing?"

"I'm at a friend's party. I called to ask you where you bought the red wine last time. It really tasted great. Could we have some bottles delivered here?" Kasie asked without a pause. Only then did Debbie notice the noises at the other end of the phone. Someone was singing.

Quickly, she gave Kasie the address and hung up. Then she called Jared. "Where're you? "

"In a bar. Looking for a job for you. Where else can I be?" Jared replied resignedly.

A dog with full mouth does not bark. He had taken a VIP card from Carlos, so he felt obliged to take matters concerning Debbie more seriously.

"How is it going?"

"It's just settled. The manager is an acquaintance of mine, and he has agreed to pay you \$1, 100 per hour. I was going to call you. When can you come for an audition?"

To be honest, the pay was good. Some bars paid two or three hundred a night. "I can go there right now."

Jared gave her the address.

When Debbie got to the bar, Jared took her straight to the manager. The manager had heard from Jared that Debbie had a very powerful background, so he looked at her more carefully.

Assessing her strong points, the manager was impressed by the confident aura and natural beauty. The only shortcoming was her low-key dressing, which didn't go with the ambiance of the bar. But that didn't matter as long as she could sing. And she blew him away with that melodious voice.

When she took to the stage, guitar in hand, one might have dismissed her for just another wannabe. But the moment she strummed the first chords on her guitar and belted out the first words of her song, the whole bar fell quiet in awe.

By the time she was done, the audience was rapturous. The more sentimental ones among them pulled out handkerchiefs to wipe teary eyes.

The manager, reading his patrons, requested her to sing something more cheerful to set a different tone for the night. From many years of experience, he knew how to play on their moods and make them keep buying.

On the manager's suggestion, a certain girl in the audience requested "Move Your Body," so Debbie picked that for her next act.

With smooth progression, she hit the refrain to another round of applause. The girl who had requested the song was ecstatic.

When the second song was over, Debbie took a brief rest, during which she suggested to the manager, "The customers can request any song, at a tip of 200 bucks. We will split the amount collected between you and me. What do you say?"

The manager gave her a complicated look. He suspected mischief in Jared's recommendation for Debbie. If the girl really had a strong background, how come she seemed almost desperate to make money?

Even so, the manager agreed to her proposal. He motioned a host over and had him announce their arrangement on the stage.

Her charming presence on stage drew barflies, eager to impress her. Men trying to request a song forced their ways through the crowd towards the stage.

"Ever-glow," "I Do," "No Promises," "Against All Odds," "Better In Time," "Wings," ... She went through the requests with breathtaking finesse, ending each performance to a wild round of applause.

She had colluded with Kasie and devised their lies before she came to the bar. In case Carlos called Kasie, she would throw him off the scent. When Kasie ended the call, Debbie forthwith switched her phone off and immersed herself in the music.

From 9 p.m. to 2 a.m., the tips went higher and higher. Despite the high price, Debbie's charming persona on stage worked to her advantage. The number of men trying to woo her by requesting songs seemed endless. And she just kept going for hours, until Jared, noticing she was drained came to drag her off the stage.

That night she had made a killing.

In self congratulation, she kissed the bucks with a satisfied smile. "It's unbelievable racking up so much on a single night out," she said to Jared who was watching her, equally blown away.

When they were alone, Jared couldn't help asking, "What exactly are you trying to buy? I've never seen you bust your ass like this."

Debbie cleared her throat and said, "I'll tell you later, but not now."

Jared rolled his eyes and snarled, "Friendship over."

Debbie patted his shoulder and comforted him, "Relax. Once I've made enough money, I'll never come to this place again. Then you won't have to worry anymore."

"It's good you can think like that. If you make any more trouble, your husband will skin me alive. How about I lend you the money you need so that you don't have to sing here anymore?"

#### CHAPTER 96 HOW COULD YOU

"I can't! I want to buy something with the money I earned on my own. There's no point in buying it with the money you or Carlos gave me," Debbie snapped back.

Sitting on the curb of the empty road, Jared raised his head to look at the dark sky and asked, "Where are you going anyway? It's late. And freezing. You're not going home?"

"No, I'm not. I... I'll spend the night in a hotel."

She really hated to watch Carlos and Megan show off their affection in front of her. She wasn't going to go home and be humiliated that way. And the dorm gates were probably closed by now. A hotel was her only option.

At midnight, Carlos got a text message that Debbie's credit card had been just used to secure a hotel room.

'I thought she was in Kasie's house!' he mused. Instantly, he called the hotel manager and asked whether Debbie was alone.

The manager answered honestly, "There are two of them."

After some pause, he added, "A girl and a boy."

Carlos was fuming with rage. So this was how she repaid him after everything he'd done for her!

He wasted no time rushing all the way there, pausing for nothing. Breathlessly, he tore into the hotel lobby. His livid face stopped the manager from saying anything. Holding breath, the scared man carefully led him straight to Debbie's room. He inserted the universal key card and opened the door.

As he peered inside, the manager was stunned at the sight.

It was the cheapest single-bed room in this four-star hotel. Debbie was sound asleep in the bed, while a big guy was curling up, snoring on the sofa. The sofa was so small that his legs hung over the sides.

Carlos kicked him in the leg. Jared woke up instantly. He was having a nice dream and this guy just ruined it. He threw back the quilt and jumped off the sofa, still fully clothed. Annoyed, he shouted, "Fuck! Who the hell— Car— Carlos."

Upon hearing Jared's sharp, angry shouts, Debbie opened her eyes and blinked. She was still sleepy. 'Why is Carlos here?

I'm in the hotel, not the villa! I must be dreaming.'

She closed her eyes again, trying to drift off. Carlos wasn't interested in letting her do this. He walked up to the bedside and demanded in a cold tone, "Get up!"

'What?! I'm not dreaming. He IS here!'

Debbie covered her head with the quilt and murmured, "Wrong person."

Her voice was so hoarse Carlos frowned. Was she ill?

He picked up Debbie and the quilt and walked towards the door.

Jared tried to run off, but the manager blocked his way. He wouldn't let this young man go without Carlos' say-so.

Staring at the boy who was trembling with fear, Carlos scolded, "Jared, how could you?!" 'How could you sleep in a hotel room with my wife?' This was what Carlos wanted to say.

'Did he think I was sleeping with his wife?' Jared thought to himself and believed that he needed to explain it. "It's freezing outside, so I stayed here. You saw it; I was nowhere near your wife!"

Carlos strode toward him, and Jared lost his nerve. He quickly cried, "I was wrong. I should've left. Carlos, please forgive me."

Carlos raised his leg in an attempt to kick him, but Debbie caught his arm and said, "I asked him to stay."

Jared had stuck around even when she was in a bad mood. He had spent hours with her making sure she was okay. It was below zero outside. She couldn't just ask him to leave—especially this late. Besides, they had slept in the same bed before. They were friends.

And there was no mistaking it even then. They were in separate quilts with their heads on each end of the bed.

Interestingly enough, they ended up getting in a fight that night. She was annoyed—he was so tall that his feet almost touched her face. He was equally annoyed—he figured she was just being petty, and told her to just shut up and sleep. They had spent much of the night arguing.

Originally, Jared wasn't going to stay in the hotel. He knew Carlos would give him a hard time if he found out. But Debbie told him that Carlos was off having sex with another girl and he'd never know. He was too busy.

Jared still figured he wasn't going to be there that long. He was just going to calm her down and leave after she fell asleep. He didn't expect to doze off soon.

Then, Carlos barged in...

"This is the last time!" Carlos warned Jared and left the hotel, Debbie in his arms.

Jared stuck his head out of the room to make sure Carlos wouldn't be coming back. Then he asked the manager for a new quilt and fell asleep in the hotel room.

When Carlos and Debbie reached the villa, it was already 3 in the morning. She entered her bedroom without saying a word.

Carlos followed her into her bedroom, but she pushed him out. "Megan's sleeping in my room," he said coldly.

Debbie was fuming with anger when she heard that. But she was too sleepy to argue with him right now. She just climbed onto her bed and quickly fell asleep.

When she woke up again, Carlos was not in her room. She cleared her throat and swallowed, finding that it wasn't nearly as painful as before.

After she washed her face and brushed her teeth, she walked downstairs. But what she heard made her stop mid-stride and stiffen. She heard laughter coming from the dining hall, and it wasn't Carlos.

That was when she realized that Megan was still here.

Megan noticed Debbie's reaction, but she didn't say anything about it. In fact, she greeted her cheerfully, "Aunt Debbie, here you are! Breakfast is ready!"

"Thanks," Debbie answered nonchalantly.

Carlos stood and pulled the chair next to him away from the table. He indicated that she should sit.

Debbie didn't want to sit there, but on second thought, she'd better remind Megan that she was Debbie. So she sat down obediently.

"Hey Auntie, I was just talking about kids with Uncle. Uncle, you didn't tell me whether you want a boy or a girl?" Megan pouted her lips, acting like a spoiled child.

Julie had just served her breakfast, and Debbie was preparing to dig in. Having decided not to say a word, she pretended she didn't hear Megan.

Carlos shot a glance at Debbie, who was about to take a bite of a boiled egg, and said with certainty, "A boy." Before anyone could respond, he added, "A boy, definitely!"

If he and Debbie had a daughter, he was afraid that she'd turn out like Debbie. Then he'd have no idea how to teach her—he couldn't lecture her or beat her.

He really didn't have the energy to deal with a second Debbie. One Debbie was enough.

But if they had a son, he could lecture or beat him whenever he did something wrong. After all, boys had to be strong. He wouldn't have to worry about womanly things, and he could teach him about the world.

Megan laughed and turned to Debbie asking, "How about you, Auntie?"

Now that Carlos liked boys, Debbie decided to give the opposite answer to annoy him. She was in a bad mood now and wouldn't pull her punches. She put on a fake smile and said, "I prefer a girl. Girls are more obedient than boys. What's more, if I had a daughter, we could wear the same articles of clothing. It would be cute to go out with mother and daughter in matching outfits."

While she said this, a picture of Debbie and a mini-sized Debbie entered Carlos' head. Maybe it wasn't a bad idea to have a daughter with Debbie, he thought.

"Oh Megan, I nearly forgot. Let me give you a piece of advice. Men are all two-timers. When you find a boyfriend, keep an eye on him so he doesn't cheat on you."

Carlos felt weird when he heard this. 'Is she trying to imply I'm a two-timer?'

he wondered.

Megan nodded and looked at Debbie with a pair of innocent eyes. But what she said next irritated Debbie even more. "Uncle Carlos is a good man. I'll marry a man like him!"

Debbie took several deep breaths to calm herself down and then said in a sarcastic voice, "Really? You don't know him very well. You've been taken in by his looks. He has a weakness for women. So you'd better not marry a man like him."

Megan stopped eating and stared at Debbie in utter disbelief. "I don't think we're talking about the same guy. Uncle treats me well. But other women?"

'That's the problem! He treats you better than his own wife. Can't you see that makes him a bad husband?' Debbie mocked in her mind. "You're wrong. I'm his wife and he should treat me well. He's your uncle, and I can understand he treats you well too. But he has so many other women that he also treats well. Like Miss Olga and Miss—"

#### CHAPTER 97 YOU DON'T NEED A WIFE

"Debbie!" Carlos called out her name with authority and it stopped Debbie from talking any further.

She lowered her head and her lips thinned into a grim line.

Megan picked up a steamed stuffed bun and said, "Aunt Debbie, please try this. This is my favorite bun stuffed with veggies. Uncle Carlos asked the chef to come here and cook them for me."

'Seriously? Are you not going to stop showing off his love for you? I'm sick of it!'

Trying her best to suppress her anger, Debbie replied coldly, "I'm good, thank you. I don't like buns. Why don't you give it to your Uncle Carlos?"

Aside from the fact that she was pissed, it was the truth; she was not fond of buns. Though she didn't really hate it, she would not buy a bun if it was her choice. Moreover, she had lost her appetite already.

Megan's hand came to a halt in midair as she pretended to be hurt by Debbie's words. "I... I'm sorry...I didn't know that you..." Her voice trailed off dramatically.

Debbie rolled her eyes secretly and stayed silent. Carlos, however, picked up the plate in front of Debbie and placed the bun on it. He then put the plate back and said in a curt voice, "Megan asked you to have it out of kindness. Eat!"

Unable to hold back her anger anymore, Debbie banged her chopsticks on the table. "Carlos, you will do anything to please Megan, won't you? If this is how it's going to be, then you don't need me as your wife. Why don't you just marry—"

"Shut up!" Carlos thundered, his face dark and gloomy. Silence befell the dining hall.

Then he stood from his seat and demanded coldly, "Follow me!"

"NO!" Debbie cast a burning glance at the girl whose eyes were red now, and brazenly walked towards the gates of the villa.

"Stop!" came the man's cold voice from behind her.

Debbie felt deeply wronged. She had worked so hard to make money to buy Carlos a gift, but now, she felt like he didn't deserve it. She turned around, looked him in the eye and said calmly, "After we've

spent so much time together, I've realized that we do not belong with each other. Carlos, we're done."

He was a proud man with a strong personality, and she was short-tempered as well. He was always nice and gentle to Megan, never letting her down in any circumstances. However, he had lost his temper a couple of times with Debbie. He had threatened her with her weaknesses and even left her alone in the cemetery at midnight. And just now, he had forced her to eat something that she didn't even like, all for Megan's sake.

Since he valued Megan more than his own wife, Debbie decided to give up the position to her. Tears streamed down Debbie's cheeks, but she turned around so that he wouldn't see it.

She opened the gate and rushed out of the villa.

Carlos sat back in his seat, his eyes closed. The veins on his forehead were pulsing visibly.

Megan, who was sitting opposite him, was too scared to utter a single word. She had never seen Carlos lose his temper before.

After several minutes of silence, Carlos calmed down and said to Megan in a flat voice, "Eat your breakfast. I'm going to work now."

"Sure. But Aunt—"

"Don't mind her!"

Megan shut her mouth immediately.

At Economics and Management School

Curtis poured a cup of tea and placed it on the table before Debbie. "What happened? You seem to be in a bad mood."

He had just run into a sad and dejected Debbie at the school gate, so he had asked her to join him in his office.

Debbie let her eyes settle on him, saying nothing.

Curtis was puzzled by her look and asked, "Did I do something to upset you?"

She shook her head and asked him, "Mr. Loftus, why didn't Carlos marry Megan?"

Curtis was dumbfounded by her sudden question. After a short pause, he asked her a question in reply, "Why would Carlos want to marry Megan?"

Staring at the tea in her hands, she forced a bitter smile. "He is so nice to her. They would make a perfect couple."

Curtis suddenly remembered that his girlfriend had asked him a similar question in the past. Colleen had asked him, "Curtis, since you are so sweet to Megan, why don't you marry her?"

He shook his head at the memory and sighed, "Debbie, you've got it wrong. Yes, Carlos is indeed nice to Megan, but he treats her like his niece. Carlos, Wesley, Damon and I all treat her like a little girl. But his feelings towards you are different. Trust me, Debbie. I've never seen a girl who has dared to act so boldly in front of Carlos except you. Do you think that he is incapable of harming you? Or that he is no match for you in martial arts? I don't think so. You may not have personally seen his cruel ways, but I'm assuming that you've heard about it."

He paused, and Debbie complained, "He has done things to me! He has threatened me several times with my weaknesses."

Curtis chuckled, "You silly girl! I'm saying that he has never raised his hand on you or been cruel to you."

It was true that Carlos never harmed her physically. Nor did he do anything cruel to hurt her. But Debbie felt that what he had done was unbearable enough.

"I don't know what happened between you and Carlos today. But you really don't have to be mad at him because of Megan. To be honest, I never wanted you to get involved with Carlos from the very beginning. After all, you know, you two... well, you both are short-tempered. But I changed my mind after Megan's birthday. I saw the way he looked at you that day. His eyes were full of affection for you. There was no mistaking it. I've known him for years, but have never seen him like that before. Trust me, he loves you. I don't believe that it's because you are his wife and he is responsible for you, but because he's attracted to you."

Debbie's jaw dropped and she stared at the man in utter surprise. 'Wow. Mr. Loftus is such a loyal friend. He has nothing but good things to say about Carlos.'

"Maybe you are right, but that's only when Megan is not around. When she's present, he has eyes only for her," she said with a bitter smile.

Curtis shook his head. "Debbie, give him some time. He has known Megan for more than five years now. That's not the case with you. Even though you've been married to him for three years, you two have only spent a few months together. Give him some time to understand the relationship between you and him, and his duties towards Megan. I know Carlos well. He won't let you down."

When Debbie remained silent, he added, "Do you really think we are stupid enough to believe that Megan is a little girl who harbors no ill-will? We know that she is not as innocent as she appears, but we choose to ignore it. After all, Carlos and Wesley have a responsibility to keep her happy for the rest of her life. Of course, your happiness cannot be destroyed to keep her satisfied either. If you feel wronged,

just feel free to say it out loud. And most importantly, whatever you do, Carlos and I will be there to support you."

Debbie's eyes widened. She didn't expect to hear such strong words from Curtis. She was beyond touched.

She nodded, "I finally know how you were able to become the principal of the university at such a young age. Mr. Loftus, you really are a smooth-talker. I'm fully convinced."

Curtis rolled his eyes at her. "Don't make fun of me. I know that you are not a girl who is easily convinced."

With an embarrassed smile, Debbie pried, "Mr. Loftus, I'm really curious as to why you are always so nice to me. What's the reason for it?" She felt that Curtis treated her as his own family.

Instead of answering her question, he said in a soft voice, "Go back home and make peace with Carlos. He has done so much for you. And because of him, you are much more girlish now than when you were with Hayden. Your only problem is that you are bad-tempered. You would be perfect once you learn to control your anger."

Debbie frowned at him. 'He avoided my question and even mentioned Hayden. How did he know him?' she thought.

#### CHAPTER 98 ARE YOU TRYING TO APOLOGIZE

"You know the story between me and Hayden!" Debbie said in an affirmative tone.

"Yes, I know. Last time, I was invited to a party, and he was there as well. He is now the head of the Gomez family and has a partnership with Hilton Group. Carlos also met him once," said Curtis. But he didn't mention that when Hayden had come to greet Carlos last time, the latter had ignored him completely.

"Uh, got it. Hey, Mr. Loftus, can't you just answer my question? My curiosity is killing me! Why are you being so nice to me?" Debbie asked the question again.

Curtis shook his head with profound resignation. "Curiosity kills the cat. Fine, I'm telling you why, and please don't ask the same question again."

Debbie sat straight and stared at Curtis with a hopeful expression.

"I'm being nice to you because I want you to be happy every day."

Debbie sat still, waiting for his next words. But he shut his mouth, saying no more. Eyes wide, she asked in disbelief, "That's it?"

"Yes. What else do you want to hear?" asked Curtis, with one hand propped against his chin and eyes fixed into the distance. Obviously, there was something more.

'Why do I have a feeling he's being cryptic?' Debbie wondered.

What she wanted to know was why Curtis was so nice to her. Did he know her parents or something? But apparently he was not going to explain. Debbie gave him a fake smile and waved her hand. "Thank you for your advice, Mr. Loftus. I'm leaving now," she said as she stood up to leave.

"All right. Get back to class. Also remember to go back home early in the evening."

Debbie rolled her eyes secretly. She was not planning to go back home this evening. Although she felt much better after speaking with Curtis, she hated to see Megan at the villa.

Meanwhile, at the Hilton Group, the moment Carlos walked in, all employees could feel something was wrong. Gloom was written all over his face. Everyone got out of his way after greeting him, for fear that they might be the target of his tantrum.

Even in a meeting with the senior executives, Carlos still kept his long face. Hardly had the director of the Financial Department begun to report his work before Carlos lost his temper and scolded him with a vicious diatribe.

Other executives swallowed hard and tried to hold their breaths. As he ranted, everyone began to ponder what they would say to make sure their boss would not be triggered. But once Carlos had started, there was no stopping. Like a rabid dog he railed at everyone indiscriminately.

Emmett took a chance to sneak out of the meeting room and called Debbie. "Debbie, it's me, Emmett."

"I know it's you. I've saved your number." Debbie was leaning over the desk as she answered the phone.

"What happened to Carlos today? Did someone offend him? Do you have any idea how to calm him down?" While he was on the phone, a girl stormed out of the meeting room with tears streaming down her cheeks. Obviously, she was also one of the targets of Carlos' tantrum.

"What's wrong with him?" asked Debbie, equally surprised.

"You know what, Carlos is in a foul mood today. I don't know who might have offended him earlier, but he has gone on to scold almost everyone in the company, including secretaries and the VP. I guess after the meeting, we assistants will be his next targets. Debbie, could you please do something to save the situation? We really need your help!" Emmett sounded like he was losing his mind.

'He's in a bad mood. Is it because of me?' Debbie mused.

She was not sure, so she answered Emmett, "It's of no use to call me. He won't listen to me."

"Don't be so modest! If he didn't listen to you, I'd be still stuck at the construction site, carrying bricks. Debbie, please do us the favor. You only need to call Carlos and say something sweet. I believe it will work. Please, please..."

Debbie was amused at his utter desperation.

When she didn't respond, Emmett asked in confusion, "Debbie, could it be, his mood is something to do with marital problems?"

"What?!" Debbie exclaimed.

As she was about to say something, she heard Carlos roaring at the other end of the line, "Emmett, get your ass in right now!"

Emmett was so frightened he even forgot to hang up. He rushed into the meeting room and stood beside Carlos addressing him respectfully, "Carlos."

Carlos noticed the phone in his hand was on and asked in a cold voice, "This is meeting hour. Whose call is that, still active on your phone?"

Holy crap! Emmett immediately hid his phone behind his back, but it was too late.

Carlos could tell from his reaction that something was not right. With a gloomy face, he snatched his phone away and his face changed at the caller ID.

He cast a burning glance at Emmett, who was in cold sweat, and put the phone near his ear. "Yes? Anything?"

Only two words were enough to draw all the senior executives' attention. 'Who's on the phone? Carlos' voice has magically changed. Why so soft all of a sudden?' they mused.

"No...nothing... Uh, here's the thing. I was shopping...and I saw a... I saw a... a book. I guess you would be interested. Do you want it?"

No one responded. Debbie wiped the cold sweat off her forehead. She had not expected Carlos to snatch Emmett's phone. What was she going to say? In front of her was a book, so she found a lame excuse.

"Are you trying to apologize?" Carlos asked.

"No. Bye!" Debbie was about to hang up, but Carlos' next words stopped her.

"Don't you dare hang up!" He suddenly stood up, swept over the executives, whose heads were lowered, and said coldly, "The meeting is done."

Then he left the meeting room, with Emmett's phone still in his hand.

After Carlos was gone, the meeting room went into an uproar. Everyone gathered around Emmett, eager to know who was on the phone.

"Emmett, who's that miracle worker that made Carlos change his tone so abruptly?"

"Man, aren't you just a savior?! If Carlos continued to scold us like that, I would have jumped off the building."

Emmett cleared his voice before saying, "This is Carlos' private life and I have to keep it a secret. Please excuse me, I need to go back to work."

Not until Carlos entered his office did he realize he was using Emmett's phone. "Call me."

After saying that, he hung up.

Debbie was left speechless. 'I'm still mad at him! Why would I call him?'

While she was still at a loss whether she would call Carlos or not, she got a text message from Emmett saying, "Debbie, Carlos lost his temper again! Help!"

Having no time to think, Debbie dialed Carlos' number. When the phone was connected, she yelled, "Old man, what's wrong with you? Why so touchy?"

With a sneer, Carlos answered, "You know exactly why!"

Not knowing how to respond, Debbie remained silent for a moment. 'Is he mad because I made him lose face in front of Megan or something?'

After a long pause, Carlos broke the silence. "Do you have something you want to say to me?"

"Yes, I have."

"Say it."

"I want to sleep in the dorm this evening."

"Not a chance!"

"Then I'm done."

With a gloomy expression, Carlos said, "I'll pick you up this evening."

"No, please. Don't!" answered a stubborn Debbie.

Carlos gnashed his teeth and snarled, "Are you sure?"

"I gotta go. Bye!"

Before he could respond, she hung up.

Turning around, he thundered, "Emmett!"

The force in his voice sent chills running down Emmett's spine. 'I thought he was calmed down after talking to his wife. Why is he angry again?"

It was the beginning of a long, terrible day for Emmett.

But that night, just as she had promised, Debbie slept in the dorm with Kristina.

It was almost 1 a.m. when she finally got off work in the bar. The dorm gates were shut, and she didn't have the doorkeeper's phone. She called Jared who found a person to call the doorkeeper and ask her to open the gates.

Early the next morning, when Debbie woke up, she was surprised to find she was cramping. Regular as clockwork, she had always marked her menses. Apparently, the last one month must have been stressful to make her forget something that basic. She sighed to ease the pressure.

She was in another dilemma. When she had agreed to leave the dorm and stay with Carlos at the villa, she had moved all her clothes. Now, she didn't have any clean pants with her.

#### CHAPTER 99 LET ME WARM YOU UP

Debbie decided to take the bus back to the villa so she could change out of her blood-stained pants. She didn't dare take a taxi out of fear that blood might be left behind on the car seat.

Stepping onto the bus, she decided it would be best to stand in the back so that the other passengers wouldn't notice the blood on her light-colored pants. Luckily, everyone kept to themselves and no one seemed to notice anything was amiss. When the bus pulled up to her stop, Debbie quickly hopped off and walked for about fifteen minutes before finally reaching the gates of the villa zone.

Ignoring the aching of her stomach, she walked briskly towards the villa as to avoid crossing paths with the others who lived there.

Upon arriving at the villa, she opened the gate and heaved a heavy sigh of relief. It felt safer to finally be

inside a familiar place. Quickly changing her shoes, Debbie quietly made her way into the living room, crossing her fingers that there was no one around. Luckily, the living room was empty. All she could hear was the sounds of Julie cooking in the adjacent kitchen.

Her luck was soon cut short, however, as Carlos walked down the stairs. The girl froze, hoping that he wouldn't look in her direction. But it was too late; he was staring at her intently.

Ignoring the man, she pushed past him, and tried to run up the stairs.

"Stop!" Carlos demanded. The anger in his voice caused Debbie to pause and look at the man.

Her stomach ached again, however, and it was a reminder that she needed to get upstairs. Turning her back on Carlos, she continued to make her way up the stairs.

Before she could get away, Carlos grabbed her arm. "What is wrong with you?" he asked. There was obvious worry and confusion in his steady voice.

Puzzled by this, Debbie turned to look at him.

He was staring at her blood-stained pants!

Her face suddenly went hot and red with shame. Needing to get out of here, Debbie tried to pull her arm out of his grip. "Let me go! It has nothing to do with you!"

The hand gripping her arm remained tight. "What happened?" Carlos asked again. "Did you get hurt?"

"I didn't..." Debbie hesitated, trying to find the right words to say to reassure him. But before she could finish her sentence, Carlos pulled her towards him. Yelling in protest, Debbie fell into his strong arms. "I'm taking you to the hospital now!" he announced firmly.

'What is wrong with her?' Carlos mused. 'She's bleeding, and instead of going to the hospital, she is running up the stairs to her room. What does she want to do?'

"No! Don't take me to the hospital! Let go of me! Listen—" Debbie was getting angry, as her pleas were continuously ignored.

Disregarding her resistance, Carlos scooped Debbie up in his arms and carried her towards the gates. While he was changing his shoes, she explained in a hurry, "I didn't get hurt, Carlos. My aunt Flo is visiting."

Eyebrows furrowed, he looked at her in confusion. "Aunt Flo? You have an aunt named Flo?" 'And what does her aunt Flo have anything to do with her bleeding?' he thought to himself.

Embarrassed, Debbie rolled her eyes at him. "No, I don't have an aunt called Flo. My period is coming

today."

"Your period?"

It was obvious that Carlos still didn't understand.

He shook his head. When he was about to open the gate and take her outside, she couldn't bear it anymore and blurted, "Menstruation! Do you understand now?"

Carlos abruptly stopped walking, noticeably stiffening at her words.

He put her down immediately. More precisely, she was dropped on the floor. Luckily, Debbie was quick enough to steady herself.

With an emotionless face, Carlos looked at both of his hands as if checking for blood. It was the first time he had been in such an awkward situation; he didn't know how to respond.

"Oh, relax. There is no blood on your hands or on your clothes!" Debbie snapped, angered by his childish reaction. She had made an effort not to let her blood dirty his hands or clothes.

Unable to read his expression, Debbie walked up the stairs to her bedroom. Carlos, however, continued to stand there, stunned and motionless.

Having taken a shower and gotten changed, Debbie came back downstairs.

Carlos had already finished his breakfast and was reading a newspaper in the dining hall. Debbie was about to exit the villa when he called out, "Come and have breakfast."

With a bowl in her hands, Julie walked out of the kitchen and towards the girl with a smile. "Debbie, Carlos said you're on your period and asked me to make a bowl of hot ginger soup for you. Please come and drink it."

'Mmm?' Debbie was surprised. Not believing her ears, she turned to look at the man, who was intently reading the newspaper as if not having heard Julie.

'Since the soup is ready, I'd better drink it first. I don't want to be rude.' Debbie walked toward the dining table and sat down. Seeing the hot soup in front of her, she gave Julie a sweet smile. "Thank you."

"No problem, Debbie. Drink it while it's still warm. What do you want to eat for lunch? I'll cook it for you."

"Oh don't worry about it, Julie. I'll have lunch in the school canteen. You can go home when you finish your work." Debbie didn't plan to go back to the villa to have lunch, and she hadn't made up her mind as to whether she would sleep in the villa or in the dorm this evening.

"All right. Then have your breakfast," Julie said. After placing a bowl of porridge on the table, Julie went into the kitchen to continue her work.

The hot, yummy breakfast made Debbie feel much better.

Leaving her empty dishes on the table, she picked up her backpack and walked towards the entrance of the villa.

The gates opened and a gust of wind blew swirls of snow across the sidewalk. Not wanting to walk in this weather, she was about to take out her phone to call Matan, her driver assigned by Carlos, when suddenly she heard Carlos' low voice. "Get in the car."

Before Debbie could say anything, his black Emperor car pulled up by the curb. Emmett got out and greeted the couple. "Carlos, Debbie, good morning."

Debbie nodded and gave him a smile. Turning to Carlos, who was already holding the car door open for her, she said, "Thank you for your kindness, Carlos, but I'm good. I'm calling Matan."

She then stepped back from the car, ignoring the man.

Emmett was left speechless. He looked back and forth between her and Carlos awkwardly. 'Were they fighting again?' he wondered. 'Debbie is so brave to turn Carlos down like that. In all my years working for Carlos, Debbie is the only one who dares to reject him.'

With an exasperated expression, Carlos strode towards Debbie, grabbed her wrist, pulled her towards the car, and pushed her into the back seat, ignoring her objections.

He then slid into the back seat of the car too.

Emmett secretly gave Carlos a thumbs-up. 'Well done, Carlos'

Fuming with rage, Debbie cast a fierce glance at the man sitting next to her. If expressions could kill, Carlos would have been killed a thousand times over. Her mind was coming up with the meanest words to curse him with.

But on second thought, she decided it was best not to say anything, as Carlos had various ways of getting back at her. The only thing she could do to vent her anger was throw murderous looks at him every now and then.

"I've already sent Megan back. You must move back to the villa now," he said coldly, breaking the silence.

In no mood to talk to him, Debbie snorted and turned to look out the window.

Carlos rubbed his arching brow and wondered, 'What should I do to cool her down?' 'If you refuse to move back, I'll have to bring you to my office and then take you back to the villa when I get off work.'

Without turning her head, she mocked, "This is all you can do? Threaten me?"

All of a sudden, Carlos grabbed her hand, pulling her into his arms. "The process does not matter to me at all. As long as I can bring you back, I don't care what means I'm using."

"Let me go!" Debbie yelled. "Why are you always taking advantage of me? I hate you!"

"It's freezing outside. Let me warm you up," Carlos replied softly.

Upon hearing this, Emmett rolled his eyes from the driver's seat. 'Carlos, we have a heater in the car, ' he retorted in his mind.

Debbie struggled, but failed to free herself from Carlos' embrace. "Thank you, Carlos, but I don't need to be warmed up. I'm not feeling cold at all."

"But I'm freezing," Carlos responded mischievously. "Please warm me up."

Both Debbie and Emmett were stunned by Carlos' shameless behavior. 'What is wrong with him? Is he the same aloof Mr. President?' they both mused.

Unable to move in his arms, Debbie gritted her teeth and told the driver, "Emmett, turn the temperature up. Your boss is freezing!"

Emmett was a smart man, so despite the girl's boldness, he knew who the real boss was. He replied in a serious voice, "Debbie, I've turned the heat up to maximum temperature. Maybe it doesn't work because of the freezing temperature outside. Why not warm Carlos up?"

Debbie stared at the back of the driver's head in stunned disbelief and anger. She wished she could beat him up right this moment.

'What an ungrateful man! I made so many sacrifices in order to help him leave the construction site, ' she cursed inwardly, 'but now he is taking Carlos' side!'

Carlos gently turned her head, forcing her to look at him. "I won't allow you to be angry like this," he said in a soft voice.

It made Carlos' heart ache to see Debbie angry and upset like this.

CHAPTER 100 MY WILLFUL WIFE

When Debbie heard what Carlos said, she sneered. "Haha! Don't tell me how to feel! Are you a control freak or something? Sorry, not today."

"And you're as impossible as ever!" Carlos commented. He didn't like to be disobeyed.

'Me? Impossible?' she mused. "If I'm impossible, then you're unfaithful!"

His eyes widened at her words. Rage flashed in his eyes. Finally, he said, "You've got a smooth tongue, and I want to give it a try." Before she could know it, he leaned toward her and pressed her red lips with his.

"Mmm..." Debbie tried to break free of his grip, but to no avail.

Realizing what was happening, Emmett coughed to conceal his awkwardness and then raised the partition of the car so that the couple could have a private space.

The passionate kiss lasted a long time, and Debbie seemed to be suffocating.

She didn't know how many minutes the kiss lasted, but it was not until she felt his erection that he finally let go. She sat straight, adjusted her messy clothes and pushed him away. "Get off me! God, you're heavy!"

Carlos, however, remained where he was. "Honey, I'll bang you the day you stop bleeding. You don't get it yet—I need you!" he said in her ear, voice husky from lust. More likely, he felt less like a man when a woman told him no.

Debbie's heart skipped a beat. She could tell from his expression that he was trying hard to fight against his desire. On the one hand, she thought she should just give in. After all, they might be the only couple in this world that hadn't had sex after being married for three years. On the other hand, this was her first time and she really felt nervous. "D-Don't be in such a hurry! I think we need to find a feng shui master to choose an auspicious day..." she stammered.

'I need to find a feng shui master before I have sex with my wife?' Carlos was amused by her reaction and decided to play along. "I think we also need a press conference to tell the world that Carlos is about to sleep with his wife. Sounds good?"

"Uh...haha..." Debbie gave him an embarrassed smile and murmured, "That's not necessary."

He withdrew his hand from her sweater, sat up and kissed her lips softly. Her lips were a bit swollen from his long, passionate kiss. She was really turning him on! His voice softened when he said, "Honey, I was wrong. I shouldn't have pissed you off. Please don't be mad at me anymore. Okay?"

After being hugged and kissed, somehow Debbie felt much better. Now that he had apologized, she heaved a sigh of relief and complained, "I must have been a playboy in my past life and you were a

woman who loved me deeply and I broke your heart. That's why you're like this."

Carlos tried hard to suppress his giggle and said, "I think you've got it backwards. That's why you're like this."

He was a wise and intelligent man in business, but in front of his wife, he acted like a fool. He had no idea why she was mad at him or how to cool her down. The only thing he could do was apologize. But was that enough? It is said that an apology without change is manipulation. Was that what it was? But Carlos was too proud to think about these things. His ego blinded him to the truth.

The car had been parked in front of the school for a couple of minutes. Emmett tried his best to drive the car slowly so that the couple would have more time to make out. He figured if there was ever a couple that needed it, it was them. He was loyal to his boss, and more, didn't want to be exiled to that construction site again. But alas, it seemed that they needed more time.

He wanted to get out and have a cigarette, but decided against it—it was freezing outside. He'd enjoy smoking much less if he were frozen to the bone. Remaining in the driver's seat, he started up a game on his phone. The solution to Grabblies always eluded him, and this time he was going to beat level 36.

'Maybe if he gets laid, he won't be so eager to torture me. If she can mellow him out, I'll take her side forever,' Emmett swore to himself.

The couple in the back seat began to kiss affectionately again. Little did they know what was on Emmett's mind.

Almost suffocated again, Debbie pushed him away—again. "Cut it out. I'm already late for class. If I stay here too long, I'll miss the whole thing. I thought you didn't like me skipping classes," she snapped.

Carlos grabbed her soft hand and stroked it while exposing her lie. "Your class doesn't start til 10."

Finally Debbie had calmed down, so how was it possible for him to let her go so easily? Last night, when he slept in her bed alone, he felt very lonely. This was rather strange, because he had never felt that way before. He was always strong, stoic, and didn't need anyone to make him feel better.

Caught in a lie, Debbie stammered, "Uh... Y-You need to go to work. You're the president. What if something urgent happens? What if your company goes under because you wasted too much time on me?"

"You're mad at me. I need to make you happy before going to work. Otherwise, I won't be able to focus."

"Haha!" Debbie burst into laughter.

She would never have believed that an overly-serious man like Carlos would act like a spoiled child if she

hadn't seen and heard it for herself.

He kissed her on the earlobe and asked, "You're not angry anymore?"

She pouted her lips and in a soft voice said, "Well, you said you were sorry. I guess I can let it go." Now that Carlos had sent Megan home and sincerely apologized to her, Debbie decided to let him off the hook this time. 'Why keep it going?' she thought. 'It's just going to make both of us miserable.'

Right now, they both felt happy and wished this moment could last forever.

"Honey, if you aren't feeling well, how about I call in sick for you and take you to my office?" Carlos offered. "I have a couch you could lie on." He had never paid attention to girls' periods before. It was Julie who had just told him that Debbie might feel uncomfortable on her period. Pain, particularly headaches and abdominal cramps, was one of the sad realities of menstruation. Julie once had a classmate who had the worst migraines at that time of the month.

Debbie was never a girl who would admit to being weak. She shook her head and turned him down. "There's no need for that. We have a heater in the classroom." It would not be that painful if she just sat still and didn't strain herself.

"All right. Call me anytime you don't feel well." He finally let her go and sat up straight. Looking at her messy hair and clothes, he reached out his hands to help her smooth her hair and adjust her clothing. Then he zipped her up and kissed her on the cheek again.

It was still snowing outside, so he knocked on the partition and ordered Emmett, "Take the car on campus and park it. See that she gets to her dorm."

"No, no, no! Please don't. I can walk." There were only two Emperor cars in Alorith, and Carlos' was one of them. If people saw her riding in an Emperor car, she would again become a hot topic. She didn't want all the attention. In fact, that was the last thing she wanted. Why couldn't he just drive a Buick or a Volkswagen like everyone else?

Last time she was the talk of the town—she had made a show of confessing to Carlos, in order to get back at Gail. Although only a couple of people had seen it, almost every student had been talking about the matter for days. And the furtive looks and whispers, as well as the pointing, drove her nuts. If they saw her being driven to her dorm in that car, she could imagine she would once again hit the headlines. And all she wanted right now was peace and quiet.

"Why not? Don't you want people to know we're a couple?" Carlos asked, not happy. Even though she had told him she loved him in public last time, that was because she wanted to mess with Gail. He knew that, too.

Carlos was frustrated and wondered why Debbie was acting like this.

Debbie was a little startled by his reaction. She immediately put on a mollifying smile and explained, "Don't get me wrong, Boss. You know who you are. If people saw me in your car, I wouldn't get a moment's peace. Really!"

"Hmph! You are not allowed to get out unless you give me some sugar."

Debbie snaked her arms around his neck, kissed him on the lips and called out in a sweet voice, "Honey!"

He held her, pressed the back of her head and kissed her affectionately. He didn't let her go until she started to struggle.

While Debbie was rearranging her down coat, Carlos pressed a button to lower the partition and told Emmett, "Open the door for Debbie."

"Yes, Carlos."

'Seriously? I can open the door myself.' Debbie wanted to turn him down, but Emmett had already left the car.

Before getting out, she zipped her coat to the top, put her hood up and pulled the drawstrings tight, so that only her eyes were exposed.

When she entered the dorm, Kristina was still asleep. But not for long. Seeing a shivering Debbie running into the room, she stuck her head out of the quilt and sleepily asked, "Hey Tomboy, when did you leave?"

"I just went back home to fetch something. It's snowing outside. Why don't we enjoy the winter wonderland and take some selfies?" While saying this, Debbie took out a heating pad from the drawer and plugged it in. Wrapping it around her hands, she felt much warmer now.

Sitting up, Kristina looked at Kasie's empty bed and asked in confusion, "Didn't Kasie sleep in the dorm last night? I wonder where she went."